particularly in market access, by developing countries like India should serve to safeguard their food and livelihood security concerns and rural development needs.

On 1st August, 2004, a Framework for Establishing Modalities in Agriculture has been agreed to by consensus in the meeting of the General Council of the World Trade Organisation, which include the US and the EU Member States. The Framework duly addresses India's concerns.

Amendments in Foreign Trade Policy

2951. SHRI B.K. HARIPRADSAD: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the amendments to the Foreign Trade Policy were expected to be announced on March 31, 2005 and whether this deadline has been extended further;

(b) whether Government is feeling the crunch on account of commitments made in the Common Minimum Programme, leaving little room to accommodate fresh export incentives; and

(c) whether Government is considering curtailment or closure of the existing incentive schemes to accommodate new incentives?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN) (a) to (c) The annual supplement to the Foreign Trade Policy has been released on April 8, 2005 incorporating additional policy initiatives and further simplifying procedures to facilitate and enhance India's share of international trade. There is no proposal under consideration of Government to curtail or close the existing export incentives schemes. However, DEPB scheme will be replaced by a new scheme which is aimed at neutralizing the un-remitted levies and taxes on exports.

Transition from the DEPS to duty drawback regime

2952. SHRI B.K. HARIPRADSAD: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is seriously considering a smooth transition from the Duty Entitlement Passbook Scheme (DEPS) to a duty drawback regime free of bureaucratic hassles;

(b) whether Government is working on the recommendations of the Saumitra Chaudhury Committee to expand coverage of duty drawbacks in order to ensure compliance with the WHO regulations; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN) (a) Government is considering replacement of the existing DEPB scheme by a scheme which would be more compatible to WTO and exporter friendly.

(b) and (c) A three-member Committee comprising Shri Saumitra Chaudhury (Member of Economic Advisory Council to Prime Minister) as Chairman, Shri S.B. Mohapatra, Secretary (Retired) and Shri T.R. Rustagi, Chief Commissioner of Customs & Central Excise (Retired) as Members, has been constituted to work out the methodology for calculation of All Industry Rates of Duty Drawback, 2005-06, and suggest rates on the basis of changes made in the Union-Budget, 2005-06. The Committee is expected to submit its report to the Government in the week beginning 18.4.2005.

Revival of sick industries

2953. SHRI N.R. GOVINDRAJAR: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the State-wise details of major, medium and Small Scale Industries which have been closed down due to sickness for the last two years; and

(b) the effective steps being taken to revive these industries in national interest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMECE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN) (a) The State-wise number of units closed during the last two years is given in the Statement (*See* below).

(b) Besides providing a policy regime that facilitates and fosters growth and development of industry, steps undetaken by the Government for revival of sick industrial units *inter-alia* include setting up of the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction, issue of guidelines by the Reserve Bank of India to banks for financial support and amalgamation of sick units with healthy units. Rehabilitation schemes *inter alia* include restructuring of